

News Release

Date: Aug. 27, 2011

Time: 7:00 p.m.

#13

T-17 fire 100 percent contained, firefighters monitor for hot spots

Saturday evening, firefighters had contained 100 percent of the T-17 fire that began Thursday afternoon on the Idaho National Laboratory desert Site. It was the second wildland fire reported on the INL Site this week.

In wildland fire terminology, contained means a fuel break has been completed around the fire perimeter. INL and Bureau of Land Management firefighters constructed fire lines around the approximately 50,000-acre burned area.

Firefighters will continue to monitor for smoldering hot spots to extinguish the fire.

Current status:

Sixteen power poles were damaged on the INL Site in the fire. Crews are working to assess their condition and repair work will continue for the next few weeks. Due to redundant power supplies, no INL facilities are without electricity.

The BLM firefighter who was treated for heat exhaustion on Friday has been released by INL medical staff and returned to her home station.

A full investigation into the cause of the fire is ongoing.

Here is a recap of major events during this fire:

The fire began midday on Thursday and due to windy conditions it quickly grew from 1,000 acres to over 28,000 acres by that night.

At its height Thursday evening, more than 70 INL and BLM firefighters battled the blaze using wildland fire tenders, tankers, bulldozers and aircraft.

As a precaution, nonessential personnel were evacuated Thursday at the Materials and Fuels Complex, but normal work schedules resumed Friday at all facilities.

Highway 33 was closed briefly on Friday due to low visibility. The road has since reopened.

On Friday evening, the fire reached the north end of the Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Reserve. In this area, minimal fire-suppression tactics are required, so back-burn techniques were initiated near two service roads to prevent the fire from spreading.

The fire did not burn through any radiologically contaminated areas. Both the state of Idaho and the Department of Energy routinely monitor the Site and no airborne contamination was detected during this fire.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center is standing down. Photos of the T-17 fire are available at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/30369883@N03/>.

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's website at: <http://www.inl.gov/>.



High-resolution photos of the T-17 fire are available at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/inl>.

News Release

Date: Aug. 27, 2011

Time: 10:30 a.m.

#12

Officials report 90 percent containment for T-17 fire at INL site

Fire crews from INL and BLM continue to fight a fire on the INL Site

Here is the latest information:

Crews estimate that the T-17 fire is currently 90 percent contained. It has burned approximately 50,000 acres.

Approximately 72 firefighters – 41 from the Bureau of Land Management and 31 from Idaho National Laboratory - are battling the blaze.

Crews are working to repair a number of power poles that were damaged by the fire. Because of redundant power supplies, no INL facilities are without electricity.

The fire has not burned through any radiologically contaminated areas. Both the state of Idaho and the Department of Energy routinely monitor the Site and no airborne contamination has been detected during this fire.

There is no known radiological hazard to the public at this time.

Every spring, the INL Fire Department reviews preparation procedures and lessons learned from previous fires. Risks to radiological facilities and important buildings at INL are manageable because of natural and constructed firebreaks, the predominant use of noncombustible construction materials, and the presence of reliable water supplies and automatic fire suppression systems at the site. INL has reciprocal firefighting agreements with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service and most regional fire departments including but not limited to the cities of Idaho Falls, Blackfoot, Pocatello, Arco, Rexburg, American Falls, Chubbuck and Rigby. More information about INL fire preparations is here: <http://bit.ly/keuXXI>.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center at the Engineering Research Office Building has been activated to respond to any questions you may have about this incident. Media and members of the public should call the phone numbers below, not your regular INL contacts.

Media Information: (208) 526-9206 Please do not call other INL contacts.

Public Information: (208) 526-5042

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's website at: <http://www.inl.gov/>

— END —

News Release

Date: Aug. 26, 2011

Time: 8:45 p.m.

#11

Officials report 80 percent containment for T-17 fire at INL site

Fire crews from INL and BLM continue to battle the 48,000 acre fire on the INL Site, which is about 80 percent contained.

Here is the latest information:

Crews estimate that the T-17 fire is currently 80 percent contained. It has burned approximately 48,000 acres, and fire crews are focusing on containment lines along several fronts.

Back-burn techniques on two service roads have slowed the fire's progression and have assisted in containing the blaze.

Medical crews have responded to a BLM firefighter who was reportedly suffering from heat exhaustion.

Highway 33 has been reopened.

BLM firefighters will withdraw at 10 p.m. this evening, and INL will retain some presence to ensure the fire doesn't break containment lines.

The current fire fronts are estimated to be more than 3 miles from the nearest INL facility. All observed fire is located within containment lines.

Damage has been observed to a number of INL power poles, and crews will resume repair work in the morning. Because of redundant power supplies, no INL facilities are without electricity.

Northeast winds are currently blowing at 12 to 18 mph.

The fire has not burned through any radiologically contaminated areas. Both the state of Idaho and the Department of Energy routinely monitor the Site and no airborne contamination has been detected during this fire.

There is no known radiological hazard to the public at this time.

Every spring, the INL Fire Department reviews preparation procedures and lessons learned from previous fires. Risks to radiological facilities and important buildings at INL are manageable because of natural and constructed firebreaks, the predominant use of noncombustible construction materials, and the presence of reliable water supplies and automatic fire suppression systems at the site. INL has reciprocal firefighting agreements with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service and most regional fire departments including but not limited to the cities of Idaho Falls, Blackfoot, Pocatello, Arco, Rexburg, American Falls, Chubbuck and Rigby. More information about INL fire preparations is here: <http://bit.ly/keuXXI>.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center has suspended operations for the day and will be re-activated at 7 a.m. Saturday.

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's website at: <http://www.inl.gov/>

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News Release

Date: Aug. 26, 2011

Time: 6 p.m.

#10

Fire crews work to contain INL T-17 fire, protect sagebrush reserve

Combined fire crews from INL and BLM continue working to gain control of the 36,000-acre fire on the INL Site, which currently is about 50 percent contained. Variable winds are pushing the fire slowly north and has reached the Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Reserve. Minimum impact fire suppression tactics are required in this area, which was created in May 2004 from a BLM-DOE cooperative assessment to preserve the sagebrush habitat.

Here is the latest information since a news conference that was held at 3 p.m. today:

Crews estimate that the T-17 fire currently is about 50 percent contained, burning approximately 36,000 acres. Fire crews are focusing on containment lines along several fronts, including within the Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Reserve.

Idaho Department of Transportation reports that state Highway 33 is closed from just west of Mud Lake to the intersection of Highway 22 and 33.

Damage on INL property has been limited to power line poles – a couple dozen have been damaged and crews are working to replace them.

Redundancy of power supplies means that no INL facilities are without electricity for support systems and security.

More than 30 INL firefighters are combating the fire with more than 40 BLM firefighters.

INL also has five bulldozers working on the scene.

Winds remain between 5 and 15 miles per hour from the southwest.

INL has resumed normal working schedules at all facilities.

There is no radiological hazard to the public.

Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Reserve

The Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Reserve (SSER) management plan was approved in May 2004, based on a cooperative assessment between BLM and DOE to preserve the sagebrush habitat. The SSER is 73,263 acres in size and designed to isolate the habitat for sagebrush vegetation, sage grouse and other native animals.

Per the management plan, the preferred techniques for wildland fire suppression include:

Avoid disturbing the soil and vegetation, as much as possible, is the primary guiding principle,

The Incident Commander in charge of fighting the fire has decision responsibility to safeguard the area as dictated by the emergent situation,

Consider advice from experts in preserve management for consultation for approaches to fire management,

Use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (e.g. water foam instead of bulldozer),

Allow fires to burn to natural or existing man-made barriers, when possible,

Apply retardant via aircraft containment line construction and fire suppression,

Containment lines are used only if necessary.

For the T-17 fire (the name of the road where the fire started), precaution has been taken by enhancing the T-9 road (reducing vegetation along this road) as a containment line.

Each year, special preparations are made in anticipation of fires during the spring and summer months. INL and its Fire Department review preparation procedures and lessons learned from previous fires. Risks to radiological facilities and important buildings at INL are manageable because of natural and constructed firebreaks, the predominant use of noncombustible construction materials, and the presence of reliable water supplies and automatic fire suppression systems at the site. INL has reciprocal firefighting agreements with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service and most regional fire departments including but not limited to the cities of Idaho Falls, Blackfoot, Pocatello, Arco, Rexburg, American Falls, Chubbuck and Rigby. More information about INL fire preparations is here: <http://bit.ly/keuXXI>.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center at the Engineering Research Office Building has been activated to respond to any questions you may have about this incident. Media and members of the public should call the phone numbers below, not your regular INL contacts.

Media Information: (208) 526-9206 Please do not call other INL contacts.

Public Information: (208) 526-5042

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's Web site at: <http://www.inl.gov/>.

— END —

News Release

Date: Aug. 26, 2011

Time: 12 p.m.

#9

Fire crews estimate 50 percent containment for T-17 fire at INL site

Fire crews have completed an air assessment of the T-17 wildland fire that continues to burn on the Department of Energy's Idaho site. Officials will be available for media interviews at 3:00 p.m. Friday at INL's Engineering Research Office Building, 2525 Fremont Ave., Idaho Falls.

Here is the latest information:

Crews estimate that the T-17 fire is currently 50 percent contained. It has burned approximately 36,000 acres, and fire crews are focusing on containment lines along several fronts.

The current fire fronts are estimated to be more than 3 miles from the nearest INL facility. All observed smoke and fire is located within containment lines.

Damage has been observed to a number of INL power poles, which crews are continuing to assess. Because of redundant power supplies, no INL facilities are without electricity.

Roughly 30 INL firefighters and 42 Bureau of Land Management firefighters are on the scene, along with 2 BLM bulldozers, 5 INL bulldozers, 2 water tenders and one fuel truck. BLM aircraft have flown several air suppression sorties.

Normal work has resumed at all facilities: personnel at the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Energy Center (INTEC) are no longer being asked to remain inside, and work has resumed at INL's Materials and Fuels Complex.

Northeast winds are currently blowing at 5 to 15 mph.

There is no known radiological hazard to the public at this time.

Every spring, the INL Fire Department reviews preparation procedures and lessons learned from previous fires. Risks to radiological facilities and important buildings at INL are manageable because of natural and constructed firebreaks, the predominant use of noncombustible construction materials, and the presence of reliable water supplies and automatic fire suppression systems at the site. INL has reciprocal firefighting agreements with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service and most regional fire departments including but not limited to the cities of Idaho Falls, Blackfoot, Pocatello, Arco, Rexburg, American Falls, Chubbuck and Rigby. More information about INL fire preparations is here: <http://bit.ly/keuXXI>.

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— END —

News Release

Date: Aug. 26, 2011

Time: 8:45 a.m.

#8

Update: Fire crews still working to contain T-17 fire at INL site

Fire crews continue to focus on containing the T-17 wildland fire that continues to burn on the Department of Energy's Idaho site.

Here is the latest information:

The fire has burned approximately 30,000 to 35,000 acres and fire crews are focusing on containment lines along several fronts.

Normal work has resumed at all facilities: personnel at the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Energy Center (INTEC) are no longer being asked to remain inside, and work has resumed at INL's Materials and Fuels Complex.

Winds are minimal at the current time, but expected to increase later today.

Multiple bulldozer crews are fighting the fire this morning. Five air tankers and several single engine planes are on standby status.

There is no known radiological hazard to the public at this time.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center at the Engineering Research Office Building, 2525 Fremont Ave., Idaho Falls, has been activated to respond to any questions you may have about this incident. Media and members of the public should call the phone numbers below, not your regular INL contacts.

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—END—

News Release

Date: Thursday, Aug. 25, 2011

Time: 10:55 p.m.

#7

Crews still fighting T-17 fire; INL's emergency Joint Information Center standing down

A wildland fire continues to burn on the Department of Energy's Idaho site.

Here is the latest information:

Personnel at the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Energy Center (INTEC) have taken shelter at the facility as a precaution.

The fire has burned approximately 28,000 acres.

The T-17 fire is burning north of the Materials and Fuels Complex (MFC). Fire crews are taking preventative measures to protect the facility.

All non-essential personnel have been evacuated from MFC as a precaution.

Winds are expected to subside overnight.

There is no known radiological hazard to the public at this time.

For the most current highway information, visit <http://www.itd.idaho.gov>.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center has suspended operations for the day and will be re-activated at 7 a.m. Friday.

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's Web site at: <http://www.inl.gov/>.

News Release

Date: Thursday, Aug. 25, 2011

Time: 9:10 p.m.

#6

Materials and Fuels Complex being evacuated as a precaution; crews still fighting T-17 fire

A wildland fire continues to burn on the Department of Energy's Idaho site.

Here is the latest information:

Windy conditions have accelerated the fire, which has now burned approximately 28,000 acres.

The T-17 fire is now burning south toward the Materials and Fuels Complex (MFC). Fire crews are taking preventative measures to protect the facility.

All non-essential personnel are being evacuated from MFC as a precaution.

For the most current highway information, visit <http://www.itd.idaho.gov>.

Sustained winds of 10 mph with gusts of up to 15 mph have been reported.

There is no known radiological hazard to the public at this time.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center at the Engineering Research Office Building, 2525 Fremont Ave., Idaho Falls, has been activated to respond to any questions you may have about this incident. Media and members of the public should call the phone numbers below, not your regular INL contacts.

Media Information: (208) 526-9206 Please do not call other INL contacts
Public Information: (208) 526-5042

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's Web site at: <http://www.inl.gov/>.

News Release

Date: Thursday, Aug. 25, 2011

Time: 7:40 p.m.

#5

High winds drive T-17 fire toward State Highway 33

Crews continue to fight a wildland fire that is burning on the Department of Energy's Idaho site south of State Highway 33.

Here is the latest information:

Windy conditions Thursday evening accelerated the fire, which has now burned approximately 18,000 acres.

The fire is still burning on the INL site, approximately 4 miles south of mile marker 41 on State Highway 33. For the most current highway information, visit <http://www.itd.idaho.gov>.

Sustained winds of 17 to 20 mph with gusts of up to 25 mph have been reported.

No on-site facilities are being threatened.

There is no known radiological hazard to the public at this time.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center at the Engineering Research Office Building, 2525 Fremont Ave., Idaho Falls, has been activated to respond to any questions you may have about this incident. Media and members of the public should call the phone numbers below, not your regular INL contacts.

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Public Information: (208) 526-5042

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's Web site at: <http://www.inl.gov/>.

News Release

Date: Thursday, Aug. 25, 2011

Time: 5:30 p.m.

#4

INL, BLM crews fighting T-17 Fire

Crews continue to fight a wildland fire that is burning on the Idaho site about five miles north of the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center (INTEC).

Here is the latest information:

The fire has burned 1,100 acres.

Twenty-three INL firefighters and 24 BLM firefighters are on the scene.

One plane and a tanker are providing air support.

Four bulldozers are on the scene; three are from INL and one from BLM.

Multiple graders have been dispatched to help build a fire line.

No facilities are being threatened.

There is no known radiological hazard to the public at this time.

This is the second fire reported on the INL desert site this week.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center at the Engineering Research Office Building, 2525 Fremont Ave., Idaho Falls, has been activated to

respond to any questions you may have about this incident. Media and members of the public should call the phone numbers below, not your regular INL contacts.

Media Information: (208) 526-9206 Please do not call other INL contacts
Public Information: (208) 526-5042

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's Web site at: <http://www.inl.gov/>.

News Release

Date: Thursday, Aug. 25, 2011

Time: 3:35 p.m.

#3

INL, BLM crews fighting T-17 Fire

Crews continue to fight a wildland fire that is burning on the Idaho site north of the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center (INTEC).

Here is the latest information:

The fire has grown to 1,000 acres.

The Bureau of Land Management has dispatched four single-engine planes and two air tankers to help fight the blaze.

Four bulldozers are on the scene; three are from INL and one from BLM.

No facilities are being threatened at this time.

There is no known radiological hazard to the public at this time.

This is the second fire reported on the INL desert site this week.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center at the Engineering Research Office Building, 2525 Fremont Ave., Idaho Falls, has been activated to respond to any questions you may have about this incident. Media and members of the public should call the phone numbers below, not your regular INL contacts.

Media Information: (208) 526-9206 Please do not call other INL contacts
Public Information: (208) 526-5042

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's Web site at: <http://www.inl.gov/>.

News Release

Date: Thursday, Aug. 25, 2011

Time: 2:30 p.m.

#2

INL firefighters fighting wildland fire

Idaho National Laboratory firefighters are battling a wildfire that is burning north of the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center (INTEC) facility.

The blaze, named the T-17 fire, has burned more than 500 acres.

Crews from the Bureau of Land Management have been dispatched to help fight the blaze. An air tanker is on the scene as well as several bulldozers.

No facilities are being threatened at this time.

This is the second fire reported on the INL desert site this week.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center at the Engineering Research Office Building, 2525 Fremont Ave., Idaho Falls, has been activated to respond to any questions you may have about this incident. Media and members of the public should call the phone numbers below, not your regular INL contacts.

Media Information: (208) 526-9206 Please do not call other INL contacts
Public Information: (208) 526-5042

Follow-up news releases will be posted on INL's Web site at: <http://www.inl.gov/>.

News Release

Date: Thursday, August 25, 2011

Time: 1 p.m.

#1

Department of Energy's Emergency Operations Center is gathering information about a wildfire at the Idaho Site

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Idaho National Laboratory (INL) Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been activated and is gathering information about a reported wildfire east of mile marker 9 on Lincoln Road.

When events such as this are reported, DOE activates its EOC as a standard practice to gather information and coordinate site-wide incident responders, as needed. This news release is being issued to alert you of the reported incident and the EOC activation.

Based on the information obtained so far, there is no risk to the public.

INL personnel are responding to investigate the incident; and state, county and tribal officials are being notified. News release updates will be issued when more information is available. Additional details on the nature of the incident and a preliminary impact assessment will be provided to the media and the public as soon as they are available and confirmed.

Please note that information about this event reported by unofficial sources may be incomplete or inaccurate.

INL's emergency Joint Information Center at the Engineering Research Office Building, 2525 Fremont Ave., Idaho Falls, has been activated to respond to any questions you may have about this incident. Media and members of the public should call the phone numbers below, not your regular INL contacts.

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Follow-up News Releases will be posted on INL's Web site at: <http://www.inl.gov/>.

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